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DEPARTMENT FOR AF, AF/E, AF/SPG, DRL, INR, PRM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/23/2016

TAGS: PHUM PREF PREL PGOV WCI UG SU

SUBJECT: NORTHERN UGANDA: VERIFYING JOSEPH KONY'S LOCATION

Classified By: Political Chief Kathleen FitzGibbon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) We are following up on information that Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) chief Joseph Kony may be in Central African Republic or headed there. Ugandan press reports said that Kony had asked CAR for asylum and that President Bozize's "chief of staff" Dr. Jebbari had traveled to Kampala to discuss the issue with President Museveni. Nonetheless, a member of parliament said that on August 21 in Juba she heard that Kony had left Garamba for CAR. Polchief spoke with an External Security Officer and member of the Ugandan Government's Peace Support Team, who said that there is "intelligence" information that Kony is in or departed for the tri-border area of northern CAR. He said that Kony has been dispersing the remaining LRA forces because he fears a strike by the Ugandan military forces into Garamba National Park. In addition, local government officials and parliamentarians returning from Juba say that it is likely that only Kony's deputy Vincent Otti remains in Garamba.

(Note: Embassy Bangui says that Jebbari is not the chief of staff but a Moroccan businessman with close ties to President Bozize and that previous information that Kony was in CAR turned out to be false. End Note.)

¶2. (C) The Ugandan press today also reported that "Parliament heard yesterday that the UN and the US have promised to support the suspension of the indictment of top LRA leaders by the ICC." Two parliamentarians present in the discussion told polchief that the source of that information is Sudanese Vice President Salva Kiir, who visited Kampala over the weekend. The parliamentarians said that Kiir told them that he had secured agreement from several governments (including the USG) for stopping the LRA prosecutions should the peace talks succeed. The Ugandan Government, according to Peace Support Team members, also wanted to be clear with Kiir that it would be the Government of South Sudan that would determine when and whether the talks fail or succeed. In addition, President Museveni also told Kiir that the LRA's demand that the Ugandan military be pulled out of northern Uganda is unacceptable and outlined for Kiir his views on what "success" and "failure" are.

¶3. (C) Comment: We have not had any press inquiries regarding our position. However, it appears that Kiir, and now many Ugandan participants in the peace talks, believe that the U.S. Government supports stopping the ICC indictments of the LRA if there is a successful outcome of the Juba Peace Talks.

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